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THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY

THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is a training monastery and retreat centre following the Soto Zen Buddhist tradition. The Priory is affiliated with Shasta Abbey whose Spiritual Director and Abbess is Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C. Shasta Abbey is the headquarters of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives of the Soto Zen Church and is located in Mount Shasta, California. The monks of Throssel Hole Priory are members of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives and follow the teaching and example of Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett.

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THE JOURNAL OF THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is published as a service to all those who are seriously interested in the practice of Buddhism. Through the Journal, members and friends of the Priory are able to share their experience and understanding of Zen training. Opinions expressed in each article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Abbot, the Editor, or Throssel Hole Priory. The Journal is published quarterly and costs £6.00 p.a.

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News from the Tiger's Lair



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The Qualifications of a Zen Master

It would appear that there are a number of theories, concerning the qualifications of a Zen Master, presently believed by western people. In order to clarify these, I have quoted the official list of requirements for one who would use the title of Roshi, Zen Master or Acarya. The following is taken from the Mahayana Vinaya in the English translation by Bhikku Yen-Kiat, 1960. In addition to the absolute certainty and knowledge of That Which Is, which comes from meditation, one who would be a Roshi, Zen Master or Acarya must have (1) absolute obedience to the rules (the Precepts, those of the temple and order), (2) ten years as a member of the monastic Order, (3) the ability to explain the Vinaya, (4) the ability to teach meditation, to exemplify and show how it is done and the effects it has on daily life, (5) the ability to explain the Scriptures.

In recent years we have heard much from persons who say that a Zen Master is totally free; we have

heard of Zen Masters who disregard the Precepts and who even look down, in some cases, on those who keep them. The danger of saying that a Zen Master is totally free, if that Zen Master does not fully comprehend what real freedom is by keeping the Precepts, is that he or she can decide that "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law;" the consequence of this, as every genuinely religious person knows, is spiritual catastrophe. All of us are, of course, at all times totally free to do whatsoever we wish provided we are willing to take the karmic consequence; for example, a person can steal a pack of cigarettes if he is willing to go to jail for doing so. He is free to get himself drunk every day of the week and to smoke forty cigarettes a day if he does not mind the karmic consequences of ruining his liver and getting lung cancer. The Precepts are not restraints - they are common sense - and a real Zen Master knows that true freedom comes from adhering to them absolutely, nevertheless recognising that, since he or she is still human, mistakes will be made and they have to stand up straight and take the karmic consequences of what they have done however good their intentions. To preach total freedom whilst not understanding the above is the equivalent of teaching "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law" to many people. It takes as long as it takes to understand this which is why ten years is not an awfully long time to take in order to learn it. As I approach my twenty-fifth year as a Transmitted member of the Order, I marvel more and more at how important it is to keep the Precepts as absolutely as possible.

As a consequence of much that has gone on in recent years in America and England and, probably, Europe as well, the implied meaning of the terms "Roshi" and "Zen Master" has created considerable confusion in western people's minds and, because of this, I have decided to take the extraordinary step of using the initials "M.O.B.C." after the names of those whom I consider to be fulfilling, not just to have once fulfilled, the above requirements. If, as and when any of them cease to continue to fulfill those

requirements they will no longer be regarded as Masters of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives by myself and the Council and will not be permitted to continue to use these letters after their names unless they have done a full sange and been reinstated, as a result of their behaviour and understanding, to the rank of Master. For the sake of congregations, in the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives we have decided there must be some quality control so that those congregations shall not be harmed spiritually. Within the requirements for a Zen Master there is very considerable latitude; there should not be found in this ruling anything other than genuine freedom which arises from genuine responsibility. Congregations should, therefore, realise that the letters "M.O.B.C." after a name does give them a measure of security in what the priest is teaching and doing and, should any person feel that what he is being taught, or the behaviour he is witnessing on the part of the priest, is contrary to the teachings of the Buddhas and Ancestors, that person should communicate with the Order as fast as possible both for his or her own sake and for the sake of the priest concerned. We can only have the finest priesthood possible if the congregations assist us in this. Good priests do everything in their power to be the best they possibly can be but are sometimes misunderstood: we need to hear from congregations and priests concerning misunderstandings.

The Order of Buddhist Contemplatives does have Teachers as well as Masters: a Teacher is one who follows all of the above requirements for a Master but has not yet necessarily come to absolute certainty within himself as a result of his meditation (I hesitate to use the term "kensho" because of the amount of misunderstandings this has also brought about). As to what to call a Master of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives, if persons wish to continue to use the term "Roshi" when addressing them that will be quite all right; they may also use the term "Reverend Master", whichever they so wish. The only reason for the use of the initials above, as I have

said, is to have some sort of quality control on who are referred to as Zen Masters or Roshis in the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives.

Whilst on this subject, I would warn congregation members to be extremely careful of the present religious fad known as "channelling". When a true Buddhist believes he has certain knowledge of a communication from That Which Is, a Patriarch or Buddhist Saint he immediately takes refuge in the Sangha which means that he submits the matter to his seniors or fellows who, after deep meditation thereon, assist him by either confirming or denying the authenticity of the communication or advising more meditation on the subject. Whilst no one can say for certain that what a person is hearing or seeing is purely a figment of his or her imagination, the fact that such things have been submitted to the Order is of great importance for the peace of the Order and of the congregations, not to mention the spiritual well-being of the person concerned. Religious fads have been common down the centuries and this one has appeared under many names in the past. For \$75 or \$100 an hour, channelling can be a lucrative business. Real Zen Masters, who have certain knowledge of That Which Is, do not sell that knowledge.

The Visit of Two Officials from the Head Office in Japan on 1st. October, 1987.

Two members of the cabinet of the Soto Zen Church of Japan visited Shasta Abbey together with a representative of the Bishop of Los Angeles and two young priests during their tour of Soto Zen temples in North America. We were delighted to have them and were given to understand that they were very favourably impressed with what they saw and heard here.

On the 13th. to 15th. November, 1987 a conference was held at Zenshuji Soto Mission in Los Angeles to discuss ways and means of registering American temples with the Head Office of the Soto Zen Church of Japan

in Tokyo, the main idea being that there should be a registry in America. Unfortunately their printed programme was inaccurate: Rev. Eko Little, the Vice Abbot of Shasta Abbey did not attend this conference: Shasta Abbey's representative was Rev. Jisho Perry, Prior of Santa Barabara Priory, who, being an attorney at law, we felt could best represent the interests of Shasta Abbey and the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives. We are told that another delegation went to Europe for the possible setting up of a registry there but, at this time, no arrangements are being considered owing to some difficulties with the French.

All of the temples represented at the conference in Los Angeles, including, of course, Shasta Abbey, appear in the Soto Zen book of temples published in Japan but there is no such book published in America and the temples, in consequence, appear to be separate and isolated from each other in this country in spite of the fact that they are all teaching Soto Zen. The standards for training, because of this isolation, differ somewhat from temple to temple and it may be herein that the problems of making such an American registry could lie. It is also difficult to know what sort of autonomy would be enjoyed by the various temples. These are some things that will have to be sorted out over the coming years; in the meantime it has been suggested that Shasta Abbey and the other Soto Zen centres in San Francisco, Los Angeles and other places shall get together and have their representatives meet once a year, taking a different centre for their meeting place each time, to see what would be the best way of doing things for everyone concerned.

Far be it from me to dampen any endeavour at unity, however I think the American temples will have to decide the direction in which they wish to go which may be a rather different one from that of the Japanese. My disciples, for example, enjoy full recognition as monastic members of the Sangha in our Chinese line, through Rev. Seck Kim Seng my Ordination Master, by the temple of Kui Shan in mainland China

nd, as such, are a celibate priesthood and strictly vegetarian except when, as stated by the Buddha, life is threatened unless they eat meat. Our Chinese line strictly abjures alcohol along with the taking of animal life for the purpose of food. Many, if not most, of the Japanese male Soto Zen priesthood are married: I can remember, when in Japan, hearing of some of them visiting the Malaysian archipelago and being treated as laymen because of this fact. Rev. Perry, on his recent stay at the New Otani Hotel for the above-mentioned conference, was required, as a guest of the Japanese, to eat crab, lobster, prawns, halibut, oysters and shark fin soup at a Chinese dinner at the Hotel Tokyo, filet mignon at a dinner at the New Otani Hotel and pork and fish at other meals. He was unable to get to sleep because of how ill such an unaccustomed diet made him feel. When in Japan, I personally witnessed the large amount of sake that some Japanese priests consume in spite of the fact that, carved in stone outside many temples in Japan, are the words "No alcohol, onions or garlic may pass these gates."

The above should not be regarded as a denunciation of the Japanese priesthood but it does seem strange that outside the gate one thing should be written and inside something else should go on. My Transmission Master, Koho Zenji, from whom we derive our Japanese line, was, of course, unmarried and a non-drinker and my teacher, Sojiji, was strictly vegetarian when I was there - priests were expected to be vegetarian both inside and outside the temple although this unwritten rule was not always followed - it created some problems for me when certain Americans wished me to visit them. In this world there are, as we all know, various sorts of monks and it is not for me to speak of the way in which they conduct their training. However, unless such matters as the above are carefully and clearly pointed out between us in America, it will be difficult for the trainees and priesthood of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives at Shasta Abbey and its priories in both America and England to become fully reconciled with an affiliation that implies a

different standard of training to that of our Chinese line and that of Koho Zenji. We value the recognition of our Chinese line and the teachings of Koho Zenji very highly; we are very proud of being descended, through my Ordination Master, Rev. Seck Kim Seng, from the lines of Kui Shan and the line of Koho Zenji. Whilst we would love the magnificence of unity with all Zen temples everywhere, this unity cannot be accepted at the cost of our spiritual integrity. There is no doubt in my mind that these matters can be reconciled: all that is required is sincerity of purpose on all sides.

Practising what one preaches has always seemed to me to be of vital importance if one is a priest: as I grow older the urgency of this grows stronger in me day by day. It is important that we know what we are and that our congregation know what to expect from us. When the Head Office officials came they were provided with tofu, fried vegetables, rice and tea for lunch. We are vegetarians except when we are so ill that the doctors require something different; we are a celibate order, any member who gets married is required to leave us; we do not drink liquor. These rules of training with us are not negotiable. With a good heart no mountain is unclimbable and I felt that our congregation members and friends should know our position.

It is good that the Japanese have finally decided to take a look at what is going on in the name of Soto Zen in other countries. Having been given a contract by Head Office in 1969 to do what I have been doing in this country ever since, their visit was much welcomed and long overdue. It is unfortunate that they did not come earlier since the ironing out of a lot of the problems that are poking up their heads now could have been started a lot earlier; better late than never.

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Notes

1. *The Journal of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives* is published quarterly by the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives at its headquarters, Shasta Abbey, P.O. Box 199, Mount Shasta, California, 96067, U.S.A.

The Buddha's Renunciation

Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.

(The following article has been adapted from a talk given by Rev. Master Daishin, following the *Festival of The Buddha's Renunciation*).

The Buddha did not renounce the world in order to become a monk, he did so in order to find the answer to the suffering that is inherent within birth, old age and death. He adopted the form of a Sramana or wandering ascetic, as that was the closest form available that seemed to offer a way. Renunciation is less about adopting a certain form than it is about seeing beyond the bonds of form and finding the Truth no matter what the cost. It is recorded in the Scriptures that the Buddha spent the last 45 years of his human life teaching all classes of people. When individuals were not ready to understand the meaning of the deeper truths, He adopted the strategy of stressing the merit of being reborn in the heavenly realms. At other times He stressed the Four Noble Truths of the existence of suffering, its cause, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation. Some lay followers were taught in a similar fashion as the monks, so it is clear there was no separation purely on the grounds of lifestyle adopted by the individual. Nevertheless the practicality was, and still is, that intimacy with the source of the teaching is highly desirable and beneficial whenever possible - so the form of the monastic life continues, and in so doing fulfils many functions.

Within all the various forms and methods adopted by Buddhism throughout the centuries, it is important not to lose sight of what the main purpose of renunciation was and is today. What was it that was being renounced when the Buddha left the life of ease and wealth? We are told that He led a very sheltered

existence cocooned in luxurious palaces without coming into contact with the harsher realities of life. One day He went out into the city and was confronted by the Four Guardian Kings disguised as a sick man, an old man, a dead man and a wandering ascetic. These four sights acted as a catalyst on the mind of the young Gautama, bringing home to Him the reality of the nature of life so that He knew that there was no avoiding disease, old age and death. The sight of the wandering ascetic showed that there might be another way, a life of renunciation wherein, freed from attachment to the things of the world, one might be able to find the answer to suffering. Accordingly Gautama or Shakyamuni Buddha to be, left the palace, his wife and child, and adopted the insecure existence of the wandering Sramana.

The four sights are said to be manifestations of the Four Guardian Kings because they served as a catalyst and prompted Gautama to take the necessary step of renunciation. The Four Guardian Kings appear in an infinite variety of guises according to need. When we are able to look directly at what is in front of us these Guardians manifest themselves - not in a magical sense as an apparition - but as the vital catalyst that causes us to train and find enlightenment for ourselves. When we see death and really confront it, it becomes one of the Guardian Kings. Once we begin to really see the nature of our world, then the desire for renunciation arises. So long as we put our energy into seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, we obscure reality and condemn ourselves to suffering.

For the Buddha, the path lay in leaving his home and family. There was adequate wealth for the support of his family and he realised that if he just continued the round of social obligation, there would be no end to the cycle of suffering. Somehow or other he had to stop playing the endless game of desire and avoidance so that he could perceive the real nature of life and thereby find liberation, both for himself and for others. The three warnings of old age, disease and

death come to all with the urgent message that there is an important purpose in our life and time is fleeting. If we are not very diligent in seeking for the meaning of our existence, then before we know it, our lives are over and we look back and think, "Well, what has this all been for?"

Some schools of Buddhism stress that although the Buddha taught lay people, if you are going to 'make it' you will have to become a monk. This is not the way in Zen and the reason why not is very central to the Renunciation. What you have to do is to look beyond the form of the Buddha's Renunciation to what was actually happening: what was it that was being renounced? On the one hand, He left His princely clothes behind, adopted the garb of an ascetic and spent His time studying under the various teachers of northern India and going in for some fairly extreme forms of ascetic practice. After six years of this He rediscovered the practice of meditation which He had practiced naturally as a child, the way of simply sitting still that we follow today. As a result His mind became sufficiently calm and He was able to see beyond clinging and grasping after spiritual insight, and realise what was right in front of Him. The Buddha did not go off and just follow a form. What He did was to go and earnestly seek for the answer to why there is birth, disease, old age and death. How, is it that mankind is caught up in this cycle of suffering and what is the way to break that cycle? He was not concerned with following one particular form of life over another. He just followed the way that seemed best and most direct for Him at the time, according to what was available and according to His responsibilities.

These days we are in exactly that same situation. We must not be deceived by forms into thinking that there is only one way to find enlightenment, nor is it any good to 'renounce' the world but only on our own terms. That is no renunciation. True renunciation is the letting go of clinging and attachment to the world. By "the world" I mean all the activities that

involve us in the creation of suffering. I do not mean that we live up a mountain somewhere in isolation. The Buddha spent 45 years of His life after His Enlightenment going around teaching; He did not spend that time just in forests. If you read the Scriptures carefully, you see that He spent a great deal of time in cities talking to people. There are many recorded interviews with various rulers, statesmen and all kinds of people from the lowest to the highest.

Renunciation is a matter of seeing what is beyond appearances. When we look at our own lives, we discover that suffering is caused by clinging. We cling because we are ignorant of the true nature of things and fear to lose our identity, or our sense of stability, worth and position. Because we cling to these things we are subject to fear and when any of these things are threatened by outward circumstances, anything from nuclear war to someone having a negative opinion of us, our fear becomes a major factor in our motivation. Our actions are then based on fear which in turn is based upon the illusion that we have something to defend and unless we in some way or other make a mark on the world to proclaim our separate status, then we have no value. Buddhism points out that this fundamental error of attempting to establish a separate self causes suffering, yet we are very reluctant to let it go for fear that there will be nothing left, or that all we will be left with is a vapid uniformity, a soulless state in which there will be no 'fire', no imagination or spirit: none of the things that we see as being joyful and fulfilling in life.

This is a mistake for it is the people who do not cling who know the deepest joy in life. In relationships, for example, those who do not cling but love deeply, find fulfilment where those who cling and hold on desperately only pervert the course of love with so much "I want, I must have, you must acknowledge this of me, you must give me these things". When we abandon the selfish mind, there can be a great beauty within relationships that goes far

beyond anything that can be known out of ignorance and clinging.

Nobody causes suffering for themselves voluntarily, we do it because we do not understand and lack the necessary insight to avoid it. We need the willingness or courage to go against the world when the world is bent upon continuing the cycle of suffering. There are many worlds in which we live, the world of the working class, the middle class, the world of those concerned with the environment, the religious world or the hedonistic world. All such worlds are illusory and yet we must function within them. If we do not see their illusory nature then we become trapped in their rules and standards rather than living by the standard of our own heart. In the world of work there may be an accepted standard of conversation that includes much that is lewd, cynical or denigrates others. Out of a desire for acceptance and companionship we get drawn in and become part of this world and its continuation by, in our turn, drawing others into it. Renunciation in this situation is concerned with looking clearly at the ties which bind us, why are we caught, what is it that we want? Are we prepared to let go of the deeper motivations? To challenge our involvement will cause the less comfortable aspects of our personality to appear but because of this, we are presented with a chance to undergo a deep change. Within this kind of situation it is helpful to remember that part of renunciation is to let go of the posture of holiness. Our attempts at renunciation do not give us a mandate to regard others as "not training". It is not an easy koan to solve!

Renunciation is the determination not to get caught up in the same cycle or to play the same old destructive games over and over again. The point of this renunciation is not the cutting off of love but the means by which real love can manifest. Once delusions are cleared away, one is left free to love openly and without fear. This in turn is the greatest help to those who may still be caught up in the

negative cycles. They will certainly not be helped by our continuing to feed the delusions. Such renunciation takes courage since, by putting yourself outside the mutually reinforcing delusion of your world, whatever that world is, you may become a stranger to your own people.

Renunciation does not mean that we have to go out and break everything down, this has never been the way in Buddhism, but we must be willing to be still within the feeling that our world is falling apart. Those who know within their hearts that the way for them lies outside the monastic life must still make the true renunciation, for it has been rightly said that there is no enlightenment without renunciation of the world. However, we must not be caught by the idea that renunciation is one set form.

We talk about renunciation and picture giving up all the things we enjoy, yet there is nothing sinful or dreadful about enjoyment. It is clinging to enjoyment that is the problem. When it is there, then enjoy it, but realise that as soon as you try to grasp it, it turns to poison. Having things which you enjoy can be an aid to training as they help you maintain a positive attitude but only so long as you do not spoil them by grasping. Renunciation is therefore not some grim and dreadful ascetic practice where the more austere a life-style you can manage to maintain, then the more enlightened you must be. That does not follow at all. But equally the other side is just as dangerous; that of rationalising away one's attachments. If it can be managed that life can be reasonably comfortable then so much the better, but one should always remember that one's ability to train does not depend upon comforts or even upon necessities.

If you practice meditation earnestly, then you will begin to see where you cling to things, and how suffering results. In the example of the Buddha's life the Four Sights were the beginning. After that he had to work hard to overcome the momentum of the wheel of

karma, since it was still necessary to fully understand what those sights meant. In our own lives we see that anger is negative but that insight alone does not stop us getting angry, we must go deeper. Renunciation occurs when the full horror sinks in of what anger really is. The realisation that this is unadorned hate, never mind how justified it might be, it is hate given free rein. When that realisation comes out of your own insight and you see hate in operation and feel its poison, then there is a great upsurge of revulsion and you want more than anything to let go of anger and hate forever. That is the first step on the path of renunciation where that particular problem is concerned. The anger has become one of the Guardian Kings.

After this renunciation, you then have to deal with all the momentum towards the indulgence of hate that exists within you; the karmic consequences from the past. Having hated in the past, we have a tendency to hate now. This momentum is converted by yet again deepening the insight. Each time we feel the urge to anger we have to look at what we are doing and not indulge in blindness, for from this point on, it is only by our wilful blindness that the anger can reassert itself. Now we know what we are doing when we get angry, and the consequences of indulgence are much more serious. Until the energy of that momentum is dissipated, we cannot prevent anger arising, it is therefore neither good nor evil, but once it begins to arise, what we do with it is something we have very definite control over. We can either indulge it or simply be still with it. When you are still within it, you are very aware that you are angry but you choose to look at it with the full light of meditation rather than the light of excuses: "Oh well, so and so did such and such and so I have the right to be angry". This is just a way of dodging the issue and avoiding the renunciation of that moment.

When we try to battle with desires we end up feeding them. We all know about the danger of suppression where anger, sexuality and such like are

concerned. Buddhism points to the way of insight and understanding, to look directly without any excuses. Confront it simply as it is and know it, for out of this comes true morality that is not prescribed by somebody else, nor is it the result of some ultimate threat, but a natural morality that arises simply from knowledge as opposed to ignorance.

Renunciation is to continue to be willing to let go of this illusory thing which we call the 'self'. By so doing, we precipitate ourselves into the world of training, through our willingness to know what we really are. The illusions of separation between ourselves and the Buddha are swept away.

Once you have dispelled or are working on dispelling the ignorance, renouncing each thing as it arises, then you can use forms without being ensnared by them. Form becomes something that is a useful pointer rather than something delusive. There is no life without form so we have no choice as to whether or not we use form. When we recognise that form and that which is beyond form are not separate from one another, then we realise they are both one great ocean. There are waves that rise and fall on that ocean but it is still one ocean. This unity is realised when each wave no longer insists on being separate. We can then know the entirety of the ocean and function fully, expressing the infinite nature of the ocean.

We lose nothing and gain everything by renunciation. Yet it *appears* as if we have to deny ourselves, so we produce a phantom of renunciation which is something painful, awful and ascetic when it is no such thing. There is a line between indulgence and useless asceticism; in drawing that line we have to rely on our own heart as the guide. We can do that with faith because our heart is already one with the great ocean. This is the essence of zazen. There is nothing in this world which is either good or evil. Only you can know ultimately what is right for you to do. This is why, over and over again during the ceremony

that marks the anniversary of the Buddha's Renunciation, we recite in the Scripture of Great Wisdom, "form is only pure, pure is all form", pointing out that there is that which is beyond form, the Eternal, which is present here and now. In fact, form is the appearance of The Eternal, so that there is nothing separate, nothing divided. In one sense there is nothing to seek for and nothing to gain because we already have it here and now, yet without renunciation we will never know it. All the time, renunciation comes back to the question of insight. Look closely! Look deeply! Look with great courage at what is in front of you and you will know the truth and then nothing can enslave you.

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The Buddhist's Responsibility to Animals

Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C.

(This article, reprinted with the kind permission of the author, has appeared in the *Journal of Shasta Abbey* and the *Lotus*, the magazine of the Singapore Polytechnic Buddhist Society).

The teaching of the Buddhist Church is explicit on the subject of killing animals. All creatures love life and all life is sacred. There is no way out, round or under that statement. There is absolutely no doubt that he who kills anything living, animal or human, breaks the first Precept, which speaks specifically about not taking life, and he who kills an animal commits as grave a crime in the eyes of Buddha as he who kills a human being; he who causes misery to an animal commits as grave a crime as he who tortures a human being. Life is life; life is sacred. A true Buddhist does not separate animal and human.

We are all familiar with the story of Joshu's Dog and the possibility of its possession of Buddha Nature to which Joshu replied, "Mu." I sometimes wish that people who read this story would realise that Joshu was replying not to the question of the possession of Buddha Nature by an animal but to the notion in the questioner's mind that there was the possibility of anything in existence outside or inside the Buddha Nature itself. It was for this reason that Joshu answered "Nothing" and for no other. His "Nothing, nothing" is the same as the "Nada, nada" of Saint John of the Cross.

All things possess the Buddha Nature and there is no *thing* to be called a Buddha Nature. To ask if anything possesses Buddha Nature is to confess to not

knowing what it is. Therefore Joshu gave his answer, "Mu," to push the enquirer beyond the barrier of the opposites; it did not mean that the dog, or any other animal, was outside Buddhahood as has been sometimes thought.

Having got this clear let us now consider the Buddhist's responsibility to animals in the light of Buddhist teaching.

All things must be treated with utter respect as manifestations of the life force of Buddha, whether it be animal or human. He who does not understand this and practise it is no Buddhist. All creatures understand suffering; all creatures feel pain, grief, sorrow, joy, hunger, thirst; all creatures experience the cycle known as life and death; it is natural and right for all creatures to want, and have the right, to live.

Bearing this in mind the problem arises of how to deal with an ever increasing animal population for which there is insufficient food which makes such things as city pounds and humane societies necessary in the eyes of the authorities. Whilst deeply admiring the desire and intention of Buddhists to liberate animals in wild, open spaces, such measures can, in our present society, be no more than magnificent gestures; they do not really go deeply enough into the problem of how to make it possible for all animals to be certain of life as far as it is possible to guarantee it to them in their natural state.

The only really sure answer to the problem seems to be in educating the public in its responsibilities to animals as well as humans. It seems amazing in some ways that man has not yet understood this but when one considers how long it has taken him to get to his present state of civilisation it is really not so very surprising. When I was a tiny child my great-grandmother could remember, way back in the 1840's, that a seven year old child was hung in England for stealing a loaf of bread when it was starving, and her

grandmother could remember public executions. Start thinking along these lines and you begin to realise how far man has got with regard to his savage instincts; and remember how far he still has to go. In some countries criminals are still executed and people think that it is right to do so. If it has taken us until now to realise that man has certain fundamental rights -- and remember that man can speak and defend himself and animals cannot -- how long do you think it is going to take for us to realise that animals have equal rights unless the Buddhists of the world unite in their efforts to teach the public that they must behave in a responsible way towards animals. Unfortunately even all Buddhists do not agree with regard to animal welfare.

In the secret documents handed down from master to disciple is one telling how to ordain animals to the priesthood so that they may, at death, be reborn as humans and thus seek the opportunity of becoming members of the Sangha. It is an incredibly beautiful little ceremony and has now been translated into English by a Japanese priest and myself and is frequently used here for the pets of our congregation and others who may wish to avail themselves of it. This ceremony states categorically that animals have the Buddha Nature and the right and ability to seek Buddhahood; it makes it clear that it is the duty of every human to assist all animals to this end and concludes with a short invocation to the patron saint, our Bodhisattva, of all animals, Jiji Bosatsu. In present day Japan this ceremony is seldom used, however, although its use can be traced back for almost over a thousand years. The one ceremony which is much used nowadays is that known as Segaki, in which the spirit of the dead animal is spiritually fed so that it may not wander in the realm of the hungry ghosts. In Japan magnificent tombs are frequently made for animals that have a Segaki ceremony performed for them and these are tended with great loving care by the animal's former owner. The special animal's cemeteries are very expensive and usually very beautiful. We perform Segaki ceremonies here also for

dead animals and humans but I feel that by far the most important thing is not performing ceremonies for the little creatures but having respect for the fact that they are alive and have feelings just as we have.

To this end animals are allowed to live with us here in this temple. We now have cats and dogs. It is extraordinarily good for the young trainees here to learn to respect and love, as well as understand, the needs, hopes and fears of creatures who do not speak their language. "Dog", a beautiful Basset hound, was rescued only a few hours away from his scheduled death in the San Francisco city pound; one of the cats had been for three months in the same cage and was utterly dispirited. Just think how you would feel if you were locked up for months on end -- remember that a dog or cat finds our time much longer than we do -- with all the frustrations that implies, with one's own foul mess around one -- remember that male and female are locked up together and can see each other but cannot touch each other. Allow your imaginations to run a little and you might get some idea of the terrible frustrations that these poor creatures suffer, even in the very best run humane society.

The answer to the whole problem, as said before, lies in educating the public to the plight of animals and their responsibility in the matter. The tragedy of our great modern, western cities, however, is that the average city pound is placed at the city boundaries where most people have no notion, or no interest, in what is going on simply because it is not right underneath their noses. I have seen beautiful kittens and puppies, adult dogs and cats that their owners no longer wanted, and many other innocent animals sent to the gas chamber because homes could not be found for them. I have often thought that if some of the rich people who give so happily to animal welfare associations could be persuaded to give a little of their money to advertising in newspapers descriptions of specific animals who, for lack of homes, were to be destroyed that very day, they might do more good in solving the unwanted animal problem than in buying new

humane killers for the societies to use. I have yet to find any person who could resist the appeal of a fellow creature about to face death. As the Buddhist teaching in the oldest of our scriptures says, "All men fear punishment, all men fear death." To know that a fellow creature faces that very situation within a few hours might bring the truth of the plight of animals home more clearly than any amount of beautiful society buildings could. After all, a good building gives the impression that the animals are being well cared for and need no assistance. A prominent picture in a newspaper, however, with the caption, "To Die To-day", would be much more effective in making the public realise its responsibilities and obligations. For it is the duty of every Buddhist and, I would imagine, every Christian also, to offer a home to at least one animal; this is clearly the law of the Cosmic Buddha. For years man tolerated public executions and then one day his stomach revolted at the idea. From this he grew an even better conscience and decided that all men had the right to a fair trial and to life and liberty. Man learned that he had not the right to play God in permitting or refusing the right to live to his fellow man; how long will it be before he realises that he has not the right to play God in permitting or refusing life to animals?

In his evolution man has made many mistakes, most more or less in a sincere attempt to improve himself; and he has taken aeons of time doing it. Because of this religion is taught and Buddhas appear in the world to guide man on his path. It is time for Jiji Bosatsu to appear in the world and protect all living things from man's selfish appetites. How do Buddhist saints appear? Understand clearly that every living creature, every man, woman and child, has the potential of sainthood, and, insofar as a person exhibits responsibility to an animal and grants it life and liberty, he makes Jiji Bosatsu appear for all men to see.

Should you have an animal you would like to undergo the age-old ceremony of ordination or a dead

pet for which you would like a Segaki performed, please bring us particulars. We will gladly welcome any animal to the family of the Buddhas.

* * *

The Funeral Ceremony of an Animal

It was, according to tradition, Bodhidharma who first formalised, and handed on to his disciples, many of the special ceremonies which are given to trainees nowadays at the time of their Transmission. These ceremonies and other important documents which comprise the secret teachings of the Transmission have never been published in any form or in any language, being simply copied out by hand by the trainee concerned during the week prior to his Transmission ceremony. Among these documents is one entitled, "The Ordination Ceremony of a Dead Animal" which is also used as the funeral ceremony of an animal.

There is no reason whatsoever to keep this particular document secret since so many people have written to me to ask what is the teaching of Buddhism concerning the animal kingdom. The wonderful compassion and deep sense of humour exhibited in many of the writings of Bodhidharma make it a great pity that most of his work is, by its very nature, forced to remain the private property of those few who are fortunate enough to make it to Transmission. The following is the English translation of the ceremony which was made by me with the help of my master at the time of my own Transmission.

THE ORDINATION CEREMONY

OF A DEAD ANIMAL

The Celebrant, together with his or her chaplain, goes to the altar which is decorated with flowers, incense burner and candle in the usual way. Thinking deeply of how Buddhahood exists in everything, the

Celebrant takes the dead animal from the chaplain and places it as close to the feet of the Buddha statue as possible [if the animal is still alive, and an ordination ceremony has been desired for it, the Celebrant holds it in his or her arms, J.K.]. The Celebrant then gives the animal its ordination name in a voice that is clear, speaking it as if he or she were calling to the animal.

The Celebrant then recites the following:-

Homage to the Buddha,
Homage to the Dharma,
Homage to the Sangha.

The Celebrant then calls the animal's new name clearly and says to it:-

You must keep these Precepts well
from this present body to that of
Buddha.

The Celebrant then recites the following three times:-

From the beginning there is neither
birth nor death [the only Reality is
Buddha Nature, J.K.].

Because of the accumulation of bad
karma you received the body of an
animal.

Discard this ugly body [i.e. all
bodies are ugly since, whatever form
they take, they are the result of
accumulated karma, J.K.] quickly and
enter the world of the Immaculacy of
Buddhahood.

The Celebrant then says the following three times:-

Desire the pure Crown of Buddhahood
and realise the True Nature of a
Bodhisattva quickly.

The Celebrant recites the following three times,
making an incense offering at each recitation:-

Homage to Mujinni Bosatsu,
Homage to Kanzeon Bosatsu.

The Celebrant, together with the chaplain, makes
monjin and leaves the altar. This completes the
ceremony.

Obviously this ceremony cannot be performed by any
person other than a full priest since the ceremony
itself has been kept secret from the eyes of the world
for so many centuries to prevent its abuse and the
exploitation of gullible and emotional people by
charlatans. However, it exhibits several exquisite
aspects of the teachings of Zen Buddhism not generally
known to most people in the Far East, much less to
persons in the West.

The first of these aspects is the absolute belief
that an animal is the spiritual equal of a member of
the human race, a fact that Bodhidharma was always
insisting upon, and that it has the right to
consideration and respect. It is somewhat more
difficult to explain vegetarianism in these terms
however since, if the teachings of Buddhism are
followed logically, even a blade of grass or a cabbage
possesses the Buddha Nature and must be given
consideration in the same measure as an animal. The
difficulty is overcome by understanding the
Bodhisattva vow, as well as the meal-time scriptures
of the Zen church.

According to the meal-time scriptures we eat that
we may not become lean and die before we have been
able to be of use to our fellow men; we are required
to eat also so as not to become a burden to others by

becoming ill. This means that a true Buddhist is forced to eat something, even if it means destroying it for the purpose, so that he may be able to help as many creatures as possible. He destroys as little as possible in this way but he must accept the consequences of his destruction; there is no escaping this karma. Because it would be worse than useless to starve to death rather than to eat a cabbage, all true trainees eat vegetables and fruit but, in doing so, they must understand and accept the great grief (in Japanese it is called "kokoro kanashiku") of having to destroy at least a little in order to be able to do good for others. Every time a true trainee eats, this must be his thought and its obvious extension is to spend the first few minutes after the meal in examining his worthiness of receiving any food at all. To destroy even a leaf of a vegetable by consuming it, if one is unworthy as a result of laziness or apathy in one's training, can only result in truly great grief. One must always remember that the Bodhisattva vow is taken for the purpose of helping *all* living things. The cabbage gives its leaves in order that we may help others with the strength that the cabbage has provided. Have you ever thought of putting a cabbage on the altar instead of a Buddha statue and giving it your honest thanks as you recite Morning Service? Everything is, by being itself completely and by doing that which is natural to it, fulfilling, to the best of its ability, the Bodhisattva vow. All things that contribute to the growing of the cabbage are Bodhisattvas in that they are helping the cabbage to be as perfect as it possibly can be and the cabbage is enabling us to function so that we can be -- what? Are you yourself worthy of what you have eaten to-day?

The animal that sits with you and learns your ways; the wild creatures running free that give pleasure to your sight as you travel along the roads are, simply by being themselves, giving you an opportunity every day of the week, every minute of your life, an opportunity to practise Buddhism.

Mujinni Bosatsu is the Bodhisattva that represents the highest type of layman. He is, if you like, the acme of the layman's perfection. Always kind, thoughtful, considerate of his family, friends, enemies, and his fellow creatures of the animal world, he is ever seeking ways of making the lot of other creatures better. He is what we can all become before we enter the priesthood, what we should all aim at being. He is Kanzeon's right hand man, not yet a priesthood trainee but definitely a lay one. Therefore the priest calls his name during the ceremony for an animal for, if man will not help the animals, who will?

The funeral ceremony for an animal shows clearly where responsibility for the welfare of the animal kingdom lies; that is, with every single man, woman and child, there is no escaping our karmic responsibility.

* * *



COMPLETION OF THE NEW MEDITATION HALL

Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.

Our next issue will have photographs and a fuller account of the new Meditation Hall, but by the time that you read this, the monks should have moved into their new home and although finishing work will continue for a few weeks, the bulk of the work is now done. On behalf of everyone here, we would like to thank all those who have contributed so generously with both money and time to helping this project reach a successful conclusion. The new facilities will make it possible for the traditional forms of Zen monastic training to be fully implemented at the Priory. Judging by the experience of Shasta Abbey when their meditation hall was completed some years ago, the next few months will see the beginning of a deeper expression of practice and training. This will not be limited to the monks but will find its expression in many aspects of life for retreat guests as well.

As you will see in the announcement about the Summer Programme, in the future some retreats will involve more sitting meditation and in general have a more intense flavour than they have in the past. As accomodation becomes less crowded, it will be possible to tailor retreats more closely to the needs of individuals. More and more people in our congregation are developing a profound commitment to their practice, and so there is an increasing need for retreats to provide circumstances in which individuals can explore the deeper aspects of training as they begin to arise. Sometimes this involves the need for a more secluded environment than that of the main hall. With this in mind a small shrine is to be established in one of the outbuildings.

Although there will be greater opportunities for individuals to deepen their practice, not all of training by any means, is concerned with periods of intense retreat. A balanced practice requires steady progress within one's every-day life and this aspect of training will continue to be reflected in the way retreats are run. Now that greater flexibility is possible we will be reviewing the guest programme over the next few months so that our 1989 calendar can incorporate any changes that prove useful. As these changes begin to take place there will be a certain amount of experimentation and, as always, we welcome your comments as feedback from the receiving end. This is always important!

It is with a sense of great relief that the bulk of our building work is over for the time being, and although we have survived the upheavals surprisingly well, I sincerely hope that future building development will not require such a disruption of the monastic schedule as has been necessary during the last year! Everyone has been remarkably patient and I believe we can all now look forward to sharing in what promises to be an exciting period of growth.

'Within this hall we must love each other and be deeply grateful for the opportunity of possessing a compassionate mind which enables us to be parents, relatives, teachers and wise priests; because of this compassionate mind our countenances will for ever show tenderness and our lives will for ever be blissful'

Great Master Dogen: Shuryo-Shingi
(Trainees' Hall Rules)

Why Monasticism?

Rev. Haryo Young, M.O.B.C

(The following article first appeared in the *Journal of Shasta Abbey*, Volume XVII, Number 1, January/February, 1986.)

In *Rules for Meditation*, Great Master Dogen asks us: "Why are training and enlightenment differentiated since the Truth is universal?" This question was of the utmost personal concern to Dogen as a young man, being a form of his most important early spiritual question, "If we are enlightened from the first, why do we need to train?" The answer Dogen found became a cornerstone of his teaching, namely, the unity of endless training and enlightened action as expressed in ordinary daily life. In other words, there is not separate "training" that leads to a separate state of "understanding" that exists beyond or apart from the training itself. Practice is not a means to an end but an expression of wisdom from the very beginning. The more one trains the more one becomes conscious of this relationship and enters into it without discriminating. To adopt this fundamental attitude of mind is necessary for one's religious life to grow within the framework of Serene Reflection meditation and practice.

But Dogen's initial question leads us naturally to another, for even though a person commits himself to Buddhism and accepts the value of meditation and training, the practical matters of how to do this arise. In Buddhism there are lay members who train in the world and those who "leave the world," become ordained into the priesthood, and undergo formal training. The degree to which they are in fact "apart from the world" differs, but in all cases the spirit of having left behind worldly concerns is the same.

Whether practising within a monastery or in lay life, each individual must ask how best to arrange his life to help fulfill his religious goals. This is especially true for the lay trainee who does not have the formal structure of a monastery to assist him. The layperson must choose what type of employment to have, whether to marry and raise a family, whether and to what degree to become involved in social and political affairs and, for some, whether it would be wise for him or her to become a monk at some time. It is this last concern, the question of leaving lay life and entering the priesthood, that I would like to address in this article.

A person considering entering a monastery may ask himself, "If," as Dogen writes, "'the Truth is universal,' and 'all activity is permeated with pure Zazen,' why change anything? Why, if the Bternal is everywhere, should I have to go from where I am now to somewhere else, a monastery, for example, to find it?" As one who did choose the monastic route, I know that monasticism can be both appealing and necessary for some people. However, in whatever I might say on this subject, it is not my intention to try to convince you, the reader, of the value of monasticism. Nor is it my desire to imply in any way that true training exists only in such circumstances or that a layperson living an ordinary life in the world is somehow automatically cut off from any level of Buddhist understanding. I do hope to shed some light on why some people have a calling to monasticism and what the monastic life offers from their point of view.

In order to appreciate why someone would enter a monastery, I think it is essential to grasp how vitally important religious questions can become for some people. The average person has concerns and interests that revolve around his family, employment, social relations, finances, etc. His spiritual life is just one area among many to which he must direct his attention, and it is not uncommon for more practical matters to end up getting the larger share. For some individuals, however, the investigation and

cultivation of their religious understanding of life and themselves can come to overshadow all other interests. Until there are answers to the questions that have grown within them, there can be a lack of real interest in that which does not address these heartfelt inquiries. To proceed without some resolution of these questions can feel as wise as erecting a building on shifting sands. To have a view of life which is deeper and wider than their seemingly limited perspective can become an absolutely necessary foundation which they must find before building the rest of their lives.

It is not uncommon for this degree of inquiry to arise very quickly as a result of some personal tragedy, such as the death of a family member or even a brush with our own mortality. At these times, especially, that which we had unconsciously taken for granted is shown to us as ephemeral and capable of vanishing in an instant. We may ask, "What is real? What is of lasting value? What am I, and what will become of my life if I continue as I am now? Will the fruits of my life reveal a human life well lived? The feelings and opinions that I held as almost absolute at one time have been seen to be incomplete or shallow through the eye of experience. Surely there must be some greater wisdom than my own changeable opinions. How can I find this Truth within me, knowing it for certain and not having to borrow another's experience?" These thoughts and many others can impress themselves upon a person to such a degree that no other serious long-term desire can compete with them. One can lose interest in other things not because they are unworthy of attention, but because of the strength of the need to find satisfying answers. These religious questions can have perhaps as many forms as there are people, but they typically express a desire to understand oneself and life from a deeper or clearer point of view. For the sake of discussion I will call these reasons for training "personal" and "intellectual" in that they express our individual longings and discomforts which we hope will be

assuaged when we finally come to know that which we feel we must.

There are, however, other forms of motivation that can be just as powerful, if not more so. One can have a sense of being drawn into the religious life by "something greater than oneself," or by something within oneself that seeks fruition and seems somehow independent of our everyday selves. It may seem like an awakened instinct that has a life of its own and patiently waits until we align our goals with it. It can have an inexorable quality about it and, once seen, one may sense that a greater will than one's own is being fulfilled and everyone will profit. One can feel not unlike the proverbial ape in a tree, sensing his destiny to descend and walk upright despite the doubts expressed by his fellow apes. For him his purpose leads him apart from others; but he is pulled not out of judgement or by a desire to reject life as it is but by the attraction of something he cannot resist but knows will benefit all. This "calling" is a calling out of ourselves and is not subject to rational scrutiny. It is not unlike human love in this respect but its gentle power and mystery far surpass it. I would characterise these motivations as intuitive and of the heart, as opposed to the first type that I mentioned which were more rational and of the mind. Perhaps because both heart and mind must go together both are usually present and in many more forms than I have briefly mentioned here. Whatever the individual reasons are, the point I am making is that religious aspiration can become the key element in some peoples' lives, and they cannot help but view all aspects of themselves against this spiritual background. But what I have described so far is an attitude of mind that has little to do with whether a person is a layperson or a priest, living in the world or in a monastic enclosure. In and of itself, it does not explain why some choose to enter a monastery, for it is clearly possible for anyone to be sincere in their intention and practise regardless of where they find themselves. I would like to offer two reasons why, at this point, one might choose monasticism.

First, for some people, there is no good reason not to. They could train in the world but as they have no major responsibility, such as a family to raise or any other serious reasons preventing it, the opportunity to be with others of similar mind and purpose seems too valuable to pass up. They could train in the world simply to prove the point that it can be done, but the obvious place that awaits them in monasticism is too clear to ignore.

The second reason is a greater motivating factor behind a person's choosing monasticism. It stems from the fact that, despite our earnest endeavour and highest intentions, it is very difficult to stay on course in the midst of worldly activity. One knows oneself well enough to foresee the many distractions that will inevitably be strong pulls. After all, it is one thing to genuinely want to know God and want to do what is necessary to find Him and another thing to do it in the midst of one's own humanity. Surely a place where worldly distractions are wisely minimised and one is not being pulled at by more than is necessary would guarantee swifter success? In other words, some people know that without the concentrated effort that a monastery engenders they will waste too much time and energy on things that, in truth, they don't really care about. Remembering how important their religious development is to them, they choose not to risk any compromise and they enter a monastery.

Another factor that arises here is the feeling that, at least for oneself, trying to "work it out" alone is perhaps possible in the ideal, but in reality a long, hard road. The self is so adept at rationalisation and illusion and so dedicated to maintaining its own foothold, that learning how to let one's self go in order to know and be in harmony with that which is greater than oneself seems like a difficult thing to be able to do entirely through one's own self-efforts. For this reason a monastic order founded on a wise monastic rule can be invaluable. With the trust that the monastery is arranged so as to show us our greater selves, some

feel that, by being willing to follow the Rule and not always ourselves, they can most easily see the Body of the Eternal. It is, of course, they who must do the work; but for them the constant reminder of their purpose which a monastery provides is most welcome and essential.

In Buddhism there also exists the master-disciple relationship which some people find particularly helpful. For one thing, having a flesh and blood teacher who has more experience than you and who can point out when you are wandering off the track is generally more effective than most other means, such as trying to learn from the writings of present or past teachers. Too often, our spiritual questions are unique to ourselves or to our circumstances so that even the best of such teaching can miss the important subtleties of what is happening to us right now. Also, the written word is open to interpretation, and while we sometimes know ourselves very well, at other times we can be fooled by our own misconceptions and therefore misapply what has been written. The teacher also provides more than just practical advice on how to train. For the trainee, the relationship with his master is a visible symbol and reminder of his innermost spiritual effort. The master, though human, represents for the disciple the perfection of Truth that he is trying to find within himself. The willingness to follow the master's teachings is an outward, active sign of the interior effort of letting go of that within us which is holding us back in order to allow that which is most noble and selfless to develop. The decision to enter such a relationship is, of course, a very personal one and, as this is so, I would rather not say here any more than I have. In any case it is a choice to be made after much reflection, for although great benefit can come from it, there are aspects of it that can be misunderstood. For some the master-disciple relationship may seem unnecessary, but for others it is seen as a rare opportunity.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that my discussion of monasticism is not an effort to portray

it as inherently superior to any other form of training. The price of Truth is true training, and true training exists wherever a sincere heart has the courage to accept the next step, wherever it might lead. There have been times when I have wondered how anyone could possibly train in the world just as there have been times when I have wondered how anyone would even try to do so in a monastery! Somewhere in between these two extremes is where I hope we can all just simply do the best we can as individuals, recognise the efforts of others , and be grateful for the fact that the means of training are indeed thousandfold.

* * *

THE TREE PLANTING PROGRAMME



In the Spring of this year, we are hoping to plant 1800 trees and, on Saturday March 5th., more than 50 adults and children came to the Priory to help us get off to a good start.

During the course of the day, despite occasional wintry showers, the enthusiastic work crew managed to plant 350 trees of several different species -- wild cherry, bird cherry, alder, silver birch, downy birch, oak, aspen and crab apple to name but a few!

We would like to thank all of those who have supported our Tree Planting Scheme: those who came to plant and those whose donations helped to buy the trees, shelters, stakes and fertilizer. We extend our special thanks to The Monument Trust, The Peter Nathan Charitable Trust, The Shell Better Britain Campaign, Ms. Catherine Cookson and Mr. Roy I. Stewart.

*...Some of our
enthusiastic
helpers.*



CONGREGATION DAY IN BIRMINGHAM AND SUMMER FAMILY CAMP

DAVID AND KAREN RICHARDS

Congregation Day in Birmingham

On Saturday 24th. September the Festival of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva is to be celebrated at the Dame Elizabeth Cadbury Hall, Bournville, Birmingham. The programme of events will start at 10 a.m. and should finish around 4 p.m. This is a good opportunity for the Lay Sangha to show their gratitude to the Monks by extending a welcome. This has always been an enjoyable social occasion and particularly so for the children.

Those attending are asked to bring food for a shared buffet. There will be a begging bowl to cover expenses and any extra will be donated to the Priory.

Anyone wishing accomodation on Friday or Saturday night or needing directions to the venue, should contact David Richards, 82, Witten Street, Norton Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY8 3YE. (Tel: 0384-373301) enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope please.

Summer Family Camp

The Priory has given its kind permission for the lay congregation to hold a weekend family camp at the Priory from July 29th. - August 1st. This informal occasion will provide a wonderful opportunity for the Lay Sangha to socialise and get to know one another and for the children to renew old friendships and make new ones. Details are not yet finalised and ideas are welcome. The programme could include family meditation, walks, picnics, shared meals and other activities.

We are invited to pitch tents in the Priory grounds or alternatively there are indoor facilities available at the Expedition Centre in Carrshield. A provisional booking has been made with the Centre but in order to make a firm reservation it would be helpful to have some idea of how many beds are needed. Details of these facilities are available on request and if you feel you would like to make use of the Expedition Centre facilities I would be grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible. A firm booking could then be made.

If you would like further details, or can offer help or useful ideas of any kind, please contact Karen Richards at the above address.

SUMMER RETREAT PROGRAMME

During the past twelve months, we have modified our schedule to accomodate a busy Building Programme. Thankfully the need to do this is passing and before the summer we will return to our more traditional monastic schedule. As a result of this the Lay Retreat schedule will be much changed. The summer Retreat week will be the equivalent of what we have in the past called a Sesshin and what we now refer to as a Sesshin in the calendar, will be a much more intensive period of meditation.

WEEK RETREATS

July 4-10 and August 8-14 (see 1988 Calendar)

With its emphasis more on the maintainance of steady progress in meditation the week retreat is less intensive than the Sesshin, but through having smaller groups for classes and other teaching, a more intimate atmosphere can be created in which to explore topics of particular interest to participants. The practical application of the Teaching will be given prominence whilst maintaining a strong emphasis on formal meditation.

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

5.30	Rising	1.35	Rest/Kitchen clean-up
5.45	Meditation	2.30	Work
6.20	Morning Service	3.30	Mid-Day Service/ Meditation
7.20	Temple clean-up		
7.50	Breakfast	4.15	Tea/Class
8.20	Reading	5.15	Meditation
8.50	Meditation	6.00	Supper
9.25	Work	6.35	Rest/recollection
11.15	Tea	7.25	Meditation
11.45	Meditation	8.40	Vespers
1.00	Lunch	9.45	Lights out

SESSHIN

July 18-24 and August 20-27

(see 1988 Calendar)

Sesshin translates as searching the Heart. It is an opportunity to go deeply into Meditation in a more intensive way than is usually possible in ones regular daily practice. This is reflected in the longer periods of time spent in doing formal zazen and the much reduced work periods.

TYPICAL SCHEDULE

5.00	Rising	1.30	Rest/Kitchen clean-up
5.15	Meditation	2.30	Work
5.50	Morning Service	3.30	Mid-Day Service/ Meditation
6.50	Temple clean-up		
7.20	Breakfast	4.15	Tea
7.50	Reading	4.30	Meditation
8.20	Meditation	6.00	Supper
8.55	Work	6.35	Rest/recollection
10.10	Meditation	7.25	Meditation
11.35	Tea	8.40	Vespers
11.50	Meditation	9.45	Lights out
12.30	Lunch		

Guidance in the form of lectures and the opportunity for personal instruction will be offered. The emphasis will be upon looking deeply within to one's true nature by understanding the causes of suffering within oneself and all things. Through fearlessly confronting self we discover we are already one with enlightenment and begin to see how this enlightenment can be allowed to manifest in our lives. Although the sesshin weeks are strenuous a common momentum develops with the help of one's fellow retreatants which facilitates a level of application that most people find difficult on their own.

NEWS

Monastic Events: In January Rev. Saido Kennaway was welcomed back after a three month visit to Shasta Abbey. We are pleased to report that whilst there, Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett named Rev. Saido as a Rev. Master of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives. Also in January Rev. Jigen Bartley celebrated the tenth anniversary of her ordination, as did Rev. Mokugen Kublicki and Rev. Fuden Nessi in March. We extend our best wishes to Rev. Saido, Rev. Jigen, Rev. Mokugen and Rev. Fuden and wish them every success in their future training.

Festivals and Memorials: The regularly scheduled Festival and Memorial ceremonies continue to be well supported and we invite congregation members and their families and friends to join us for the Lotus and Festival ceremonies that are scheduled on the first Sunday of each month. Forthcoming ceremonies include the important Buddhist celebration of the Buddha's Birth (Wesak) on May 8th. (at which we particularly welcome children), and Lotus Ceremonies scheduled for the 5th. June and the 3rd. July. Please note that the Festival of Bhaisajya Tathagata will now be held on the 11th. September, and not on the 25th. September as previously stated.

Memorial services were held for Arthur William Garwood, Shirley Elizabeth Foster, Sven Schiott, Valentyna Kublicka-Piottuch and a memorial was requested by Daniel Reeve for the 27 marines of his platoon who were killed in action in Viet Nam.

"The great saint turns the Wheel of the Law and thereby shows many aspects of the Truth; he rescues those who are in distress and brings them to great happiness."

From the offertory of the memorial ceremony.

Other Ceremonies: On the 8th. March the wedding of Simon Horobin and Christine Grey took place here at the Priory. We wish Simon and Christine happiness and every success in their training.

After the 'Family Day' meeting held in Guildford on the 28th. February, a priest from the Priory was invited to bless the house of Peter and Judy Lavin and their children Jody and Katie. At this ceremony the Scripture of Great Wisdom was recited and the Precepts given; a copy of the blood-line certificate of the Precepts being permanently housed in a place of honour above the front door. At this simple and joyful ceremony the family and friends were given the opportunity to re-commit themselves to the Precepts and to the path of Buddhist training. The merit of the ceremony was offered for the peace and safety of the family and house.

Retreat News: Over the Christmas holiday period we held a variety of events at the Priory commencing with the celebration of the Buddha's Enlightenment on the 25th. December. This celebration has been moved from its traditional date of the 8th. December as a means of adapting to our western culture. Instead of the usual kind of retreat there was a relaxed period of rest and celebration enjoyed by a number of guests and monks together. The highlight of the New Year retreat that followed was the midnight ceremony in which all expressed their gratitude for the teaching of the past year and shared in the essence of compassion that is symbolised by the tea offered to all during the ceremony. The next day everyone partook of a splendid feast. Between celebrations there was ample opportunity to receive teaching, meditate and deepen one's practice. This style of retreat seemed to work well and the Priory will be open to guests throughout the whole holiday period again next year.

Monks continued to attend a variety of outside retreats held around the country and in Holland and gave a number of public talks designed to encourage people to attend local groups for the first time. The

diary for the rest of the year is filling up fast and amongst forthcoming events is a half day retreat in Edinburgh on Saturday 21st. May; and one day retreats in Cardiff, Leeds, Chesterfield, Cambridge and Stourbridge in June (Check with us for details).

Begging Bowl: The Priory bookshop requests 'bubble-pack' and polystyrene 'peanuts' to help package mail-order items, and parcel scales for weighing up to 5 kilos.

Now that the new building is almost completed the Priory is interested in obtaining lounge chairs and settees for the new monk's common room. If you think you might be able to help with this, please contact the Treasurer.

Hardy plants, shrubs and cuttings are always welcome for the Priory garden.

Donations: The Priory is grateful for the many donations received over the recent months. A beautiful Bodhidharma Scroll was received as well as some very helpful additions to our library. With the winter flu season in full swing the infirmary was grateful for the offering of medicinal herbs and containers. Members of the Nottingham group helped with time and materials for the repair of the temple drum, and many useful items were donated to help the various monastic departments. These included flowers for the altar, colour pencils, masking tape, white paint, handcream, a chair, a Dutch-English dictionary, envelopes, mixing bowls, kitchen gloves and equipment, a dimmer switch, plants, and cat and dog treats.

All trainees enjoyed the many donations of food which included tea, coffee, a selection of nuts and raisins, tofu, beans, rice, eggs, butter, honey, cheese, jams, peanut butter, biscuits and chocolate.

Our thanks also go to Patrick Robinson, a regular member of the children's Sunday group, for his donation of a photograph which he took of the Priory geese (see page 28).

Throssel Hole Priory Bookshop Company Ltd

The Liturgy of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives for the Laity, by Rev. Roshi P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, Shasta Abbey Press, 1987. [276 pages softbound with plastic jacket £7.50]

We are very pleased to be able to offer this book which contains, in English, the scriptures and ceremonies of the Serene Reflection Meditation Church that are most often used by the laity. In preparing this book, Rev. Roshi Jiyu-Kennett wished to present all that is necessary for members of the laity to join fully in the Buddhist liturgy both when visiting a monastery or priory and when at home. Twenty-nine ceremonies are described in detail; among them are the complete daily office, the ceremonies for becoming a lay Buddhist, the Naming Ceremony, the Wedding Ceremony, the Ceremonial used to Give Thanks for a Meal and/or Lodging from a Congregation Member or Monastery, the Funeral and Memorial Services and the ceremonies for Feeding the Hungry Ghosts. It also contains the words and music of a number of Invocations (hymns), including those of the Festival of the Buddha's Birth and the Festival of the Buddha's Enlightenment.

"The Dharma Body of the Buddha cannot be seen so long as one is within duality, for It is beyond birth and death, filling all things."

These are the words of Great Master Keizan Jokin who, in the fourteenth century, wrote many of the ceremonies that we use today. The purpose of the scriptures and ceremonies is to point us back to the Unborn, the Undying, the Uncaused, the Unchanging; to show us how to live beyond birth and death, in harmony with all things.

Throssel Hole Priory Bookshop Company Ltd

Zen is Eternal Life, by Rev. Roshi P.T.N.H. Jiyu-Kennett, third edition, Shasta Abbey Press, 1987. [319 pages softbound £9.50]

All men know suffering which is as the mud in which the lotus takes its root: all know the lotus blossom which gazes at the heavens. Few men indeed know how to nourish the root of True Religion within themselves in the mud of ignorance which surrounds them and fewer still know how to make that root flourish and grow the long stem needed in the dark water before the flower can bloom in the clear light of day. In this introduction I am attempting to show how to grow the long stem of the lotus, from the root to the blossom, for the stem of the lotus and Zen training are identical.
[from Book One.]

In addition to Book One, which includes nine chapters written by Rev. Roshi Jiyu-Kennett on the essential aspects of Zen, this work includes, in Book Two, "The Teachings of Dogen" and, in Book Three, "The Teachings of Keizan," being translations of their most important writings from the point of view of daily Zen practice.

There has been revision of the text throughout this edition and especially of Book Three, which is in the form in which it was originally translated rather than as it was first published.

The price of the books includes the cost of postage and packing.

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